

Escarpment

Escarpment's flagship single-vineyard pinot, planted in 1999, has become a modern New Zealand benchmark, showcasing the Martinborough terrace's powerful yet finely etched style.

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MARTINBOROUGH



Kupe Pinot Noir 2022

Martinborough, New Zealand

Region and Vineyards

Martinborough sits in **Wairarapa**, a cool, dry, wind-kissed corner of New Zealand's North Island famed for lithe yet concentrated Pinot Noir. Here, high sunshine hours, pronounced diurnals and modest rainfall encourage slow ripening and aromatic finesse while preserving acidity. The **Te Muna Road** terraces, slightly elevated and east of the township, are layered with old river gravels that shed water quickly, naturally limiting vigour and concentrating flavour.

Kupe is drawn entirely from Escarpment's **home block** on Te Muna Road, first planted in **1999**, rooted in free-draining **alluvial gravels** on the Martinborough terrace. These stones, mixed with loams and deeper deposits, yield pinot with dark-cherry depth, herbal nuance and a firm, long-stranded tannin line—attributes that have helped establish Kupe as a stylistic reference for the region. Vine rows are close-planted, exploiting the site's low fertility to build natural concentration and savoury detail.

Winemaking

Kupe 2022 is **100% Pinot Noir (Abel clone)**. Cool-season fruit was destemmed to open-top fermenters for **indigenous-yeast** fermentation. Caps were **hand-plunged once daily**; total vat time averaged **30 days** to shape fine-grained structure without harsh extraction. Press wine was separated, and the free-run was settled before barreling.

Élevage followed in **French oak barriques (42% new) for 20 months**, **no racking**, then **bottled without fining or filtration** to preserve texture and aromatic detail. Key analytics: **14.0% alc.**, **TA 5.2 g/L**, **pH 3.66**, **RS <1 g/L**; **TDE 31.2 g/L**. The approach privileges purity and mouthfeel—silky, mouth-filling pinot with depth, line and site transparency.

Alcohol :14,00 %

Composition: 100% Pinot Noir

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Tasting Notes

- **Color:** Deep ruby with a vibrant rim; limpid and youthful.
- **Aroma:** Raspberry coulis, dark cherry and rosehip layered with cedar, sandalwood and a twist of bitter orange; hints of graphite and blue florals add intrigue.
- **Palate:** Rich yet buoyant; glossy red and dark fruits carry over fine, mouth-coating tannins and a **crunchy** freshness. Cedar spice and savoury kernel notes frame a long, composed finish.

Did you know?

"**Kupe**" honours the legendary Polynesian navigator of Māori tradition and lends its name to local landmarks near Martinborough; the Escarpment brand imagery draws on this story of exploration and place.

Wine Pairing Ideas

- **Five-spice duck breast:** Sweet-savory spice and rendered fat dovetail with Kupe's cedar, sandalwood and dark-cherry core.
- **Wild mushroom risotto:** Umami depth and creamy texture echo the wine's savoury layers and fine, persistent tannins.
- **Rosemary lamb rump:** Herb perfume mirrors rosehip and bitter-orange lift; structure handles protein richness.
- **Beetroot and goat's cheese salad:** Earthy sweetness and tang align with red-fruit brightness and palate freshness.

95

Robert Parker (RP) : 95 Points (2022)

The 2022 Kupe Pinot Noir is mouthfilling and complex, with gravitas and weight without being heavy. The splay of tannin in the mouth starts right at the very front and fans out through the long finish. It is the most harmonious and intense of the four single-vineyard wines tasted here today, and while I am seriously attracted to the levity and intrigue of the Kiwa, this Kupe is wonderful for different reasons. There's density, muscle, slow/patient repose and complex nuance in the mouth. It's a great, distinct wine. Sealed under screw cap.

96 James Suckling

James Suckling (JS) : 96 Points (2021)

A very tannic and crunchy wine with cashmere texture and powerful structure. Rather muscular. Full body. Fantastic depth of fruit. Blackberry with some dried strawberry and orange peel. Needs three or four years to soften. Best after 2027.

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Vinous (Antonio Galloni) (VN) : 95 Points (2021)

The 2021 Kupe is a hugely structured Pinot Noir. In 2021, this wine boasts tiny berries, 50% whole bunches, 28 days on skins and 40% new oak, resulting in a not shy tannic grip. It has masses of intensity with silken red cherry and plum fruit that just about manage to pull off the tannins, but it requires time or a steak. While it has massive substance, the fragrance and freshness carry this wine home. Leave on the wine rack until at least 2025. It'll be better for it.